

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IT US

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON VISIT OF ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDERSECRETARY

BENSI: BIO DATA

REF: ROME 12532

1. CESARE BENSI, FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDERSECRETARY, BORN FEBRUARY 11, 1922, MILAN, DEGREE IN CHEMICAL ENGINEERING. FATHER WAS ANTI-FASCIST LABOR LEADER WHO DIED IN EXILE IN FRANCE. AT AGE OF EIGHT, BENSI RETURNED TO ITALY WITH MOTHER AND BY AGE OF TEN WAS ASSISTING HER IN MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH OTHER ANTI-FASCIST ACTIVISTS. SUBSEQUENTLY, HIS MOTHER WAS JAILED FOR SEVERAL YEARS FOR ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITY AND BENSI HIMSELF SPENT OVER A MONTH IN PRISON AT AGE 15. DURING WORLD WAR II, BENSI WAS AN ACTIVE PARTISAN AND IN THE IMMEDIATE POST WAR YEARS HE WAS A MAJOR LEADER IN THE SOCIALIST YOUTH MOVEMENT. BENSI IS PRESENTLY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S CENTER FACTION AND LED BY PARTY SECRETARY DE MARTINO. HIS WIFE (ANTINELLA) IS A FORMER COMMUNIST. BENSI HAS BEEN A DEPUTY IN THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT SINCE 1948, SERVING ON THE EDUCATION AND ARTS COMMITTEE, THE FINANCE AND TREASURY COMMITTEE, AND AS PRESIDENT OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CIVIL AVIATION. HE WAS UNDERSECRETARY OF FINANCE IN THE FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD MORO GOVERNMENTS (1963-68). HIS APPOINTMENT IN JULY AS FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDERSECRETARY IN THE PRESENT RUMOR GOVERNMENT IS HIS FIRST DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD. BENSI VISITED THE UNITED STATES AS A LEADER GRANTEE IN 1962.

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HE HAS LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH. THERE ARE

DIFFERING VIEWS AMONG FOREIGN MINISTRY PROFESSIONALS ABOUT BENSI. ONE MFA SOURCE HAS DESCRIBED HIM AS HONEST, PLAIN-SPOKEN, PRAGMATIC, OPEN-MINDED AND RECEPTIVE TO NEW IDEAS. OTHERS HAVE DESCRIBED BENSI AS BEING IMMersed IN SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY, AND HIS MODUS OPERANDI AS BULL IN A CHINA SHOP. IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNDERSECRETARIES AT THE ITALIAN MFA ARE NOT CLEARLY DEFINED AND THEREFORE THE INCUMBENTS OF THESE POSITIONS FLOAT IN A LIMBO BETWEEN THE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL LEVEL AND THE MINISTER. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BENSI HAS UNDERSTANDABLY BEEN FRUSTRATED BY THIS AMBIGUITY WHICH HAS CAUSED HIM ON OCCASION TO INTRUDE IN MATTERS IN WHICH HIS RELATIVE INEXPERIENCE HAS CAUSED THE MINISTRY EMBARRASSMENT.

2. GIUSEPPE SANTORO, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO UNDERSECRETARY BENSI, BORN IN PROVINCE OF BRINDISI, OCTOBER 11, 1930. DIPLOMA IN JURISPRUDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY OF ROME, 1952. ENTERED DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1957 AND HAS SERVED AT TUNIS, OTTAWA, HAVANA (1964-67), AND IN ROME. PRESENT RANK IS COUNSELOR OF LEGATION. SANTORO IS REPUTED TO BE AN EXTREME LEFTIST, AND IS KNOWN TO BE ACTIVE IN THE "FARNESINA DEMOCRATICA", A SMALL LEFT-WING ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ORGANIZATION OF ITALIAN FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS WHICH SEEKS RADICAL CHANGE IN THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY STRUCTURE. HIS ASSIGNMENT AS BENSI'S ASSISTANT IS HIS FIRST SIGNIFICANT POST IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND PROBABLY REFLECTS SOCIALIST PARTY PROCLIVITY TOWARD "FARNESINA DEMOCRATICA". USABLE ENGLISH.

3. MARCO FORTINI, BORN TURIN 28 SEPT. 1926. DIPLOMAS IN JURISPRUDENCE, 1949, AND POLITICAL SCIENCE, 1951, BOTH FROM UNIVERSITY OF TURIN. ENTERED DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1955 AND SUBSEQUENTLY SERVED AT MULHOUSE, PARIS, METZ AND HELSINKI. ATTENDED NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE 1962. PRESENT RANK COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY. HAS SERVED IN FOREIGN MINISTRY AS OFFICE DIRECTOR FOR UNITED NATIONS POLITICAL AFFAIRS, AND IS PRESENTLY OFFICE DIRECTOR OF LATIN AMERICAN POLITICAL AFFAIRS. FORTINI IS A REGULAR CONTACT OF THE EMBASSY: HE IS COOPERATIVE, FORTHCOMING AND WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD U.S. ADEQUATE ENGLISH.

4. RICCARDO PIGNATELLI, OFFICE DIRECTOR OF LATIN AMERICA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. BORN NAPLES 14 APRIL 1927. DEGREE IN
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JURISPRUDENCE, UNIVERSITY OF ROME, 1950. PRESENT RANK COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY. ENTERED DIPLOMATIC SERVICE 1954, AND SUBSEQUENTLY SERVED AT ATHENS, TEL AVIV AND IN VARIOUS POSITIONS IN ROME. PIGNATELLI IS PERIODIC CONTACT OF EMBASSY AND IS COOPERATIVE, FORTHCOMING AND WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD U.S. EXCELLENT ENGLISH. VOLPE

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